

The Heart of Hiccup

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Summary: Becoming Chief has never been something Hiccup wanted but now, two years into the job, he's starting to realise just why his dad loved it so much. Life is peaceful (or as peaceful as Berk can get) and Hiccup is finally starting to discover who he is... until a certain madman from his past has him questioning himself all over again. How will Hiccup save Berk this time round?

1. Chapter 1

As Hiccup fell to his death he couldn't help but think how cool it was, to be free-falling through the sky at such a speed it was making his arms and legs go numb. Surely he should be saying some sort of prayer to the Gods just now? To ask for a safe journey to the gates of Valhalla or something like that but instead he was too busy enjoying the rush of flying through the sky, rushing past all the chaos. He could hear screams. His mum. His beautiful girlfriend. His friends. Gobber. Everyone shouted. Everyone tried to save the boy, who was no longer a boy but now a man, who had changed Berk for the better. But they were all too far away and he was too close to the ground, spiralling towards the jagged spikes of rocks that peaked out the sea, razor sharp and unforgiving. As the reality of the situation dawned on Hiccup, he closed his eyes and hoped for it to be quick. For it to be not too painful. Further down he soared until he gasped as pain engulfed him and his world turned black.

So let's start from the beginning as it'd be rude for me to only give you the end. First let's introduce Hiccup Horrendous Haddock the third. The proud Chief of Berk. Berk is where he and his loyal and ever supporting people live. It had been two years since he had first been given the title of Chief and he was getting pretty darn good at it. With of course the help from others. Astrid kept him together at times where he thought he was going to fall apart. Gobber helped him with anything and everything, constantly at the young man's side and revelling at how much he was like his father. Everyday Gobber cursed Stoick for dying before he could see what a great Chief Hiccup had become but he knew that Stoick was there in spirit, smiling alongside

him. Valka was there every morning and every night with food on the table and a gentle mothering hug to ease away all of Hiccup's worries. And of course there was Toothless. The dragon never left the Chief's side, it was like after the passing of Stoick the two had become closer, which astounded the residents of Berk as they were sure the two couldn't have gotten any closer even if they had tried. But they were. And the two never left each other's side. It hadn't taken Astrid too long to adjust to sharing her boyfriend with a dragon. He even slept in the same room as the couple, Astrid would never admit it but she was thankful for the dragon's protectiveness over her Hiccup as she worried every day about losing him.

Hiccup thought that as soon as he became Chief his life as he knew it would be gone and in place a life of constant stress and no time to rest or enjoy the simple pleasures, like flying in the dimming light of a winter sunset. But it hadn't been like that, he'd had time for both. Of course he had had to mature a little bit and take on the responsibility for his people but it wasn't so bad. It wasn't until his third month in that Hiccup had realised that Stoick had been training Hiccup for this the past couple of years, and more to the new Chief's surprise he discovered he had been protecting his people ever since saving them on Dragon Island. To know that his father had slowly been preparing him for chief made his heart ache and warm at the same time.

But all that mattered now was to protect his own. Personally he thought he was doing an okay job but others would disagree and instead thought he was doing an amazing job.

"Hiccup!" someone shouted from afar.

Hiccup looked up and seen Fishlegs running towards him, he was at such a speed that his legs arrived to Hiccup before the rest of Fishlegs did.

"Sorry, I mean Chief!" Fishlegs slapped a hand to his forehead in frustration, it may have been two years but most days he still couldn't quite believe it that his friend was the Chief.

Hiccup rolled his eyes, "Fishlegs we've been over this, you can just call me Hiccup"

"I know, I know" Fishlegs dropped beside Hiccup on the large rock he was propped against. The sun was low in the sky and it was Hiccup's favourite time of the day. Hiccup always walked up past the cabbage fields to the small clearing which was as soft as feathers. It was on top of a small hill, not too high but still at a height that Hiccup could clear his mind and work on new designs or find solutions to problems for Berk.

Toothless nuzzled Fishlegs softly, receiving the fond scratch to his chin that he'd been hoping for.

"Wow, it truly is beautiful up here" Fishlegs smiled contentedly as looked out at sea and then down at Berk where the Vikings looked like small ants. Hiccup gave him a sideways smile. He always enjoyed his friend's company and knew that he was one of the few people that would just happily sit with him and share a comfortable silence with.

Hiccup returned to his drawing, with his friend by his side he felt more relaxed. He had been working on building some classrooms for the Dragon Academy. Although the practical side of dragon training was absolutely essential and the best way to learn, Berk didn't always have the best of weather and some things could be learned through theory so he and Astrid had decided to create a small nest of classrooms so that when the storms were too dangerous to fly in, the learning could still continue inside. The pair continued to sit in silence for awhile before Hiccup frowned, remembering his friends urgency and frantic appearance not so long ago.

"Fishlegs, what did you want again?" the Chief asked.

Fishlegs matched Hiccups frown before squealing and jumping to his feet, "Oh I can't believe I forgot!" he grabbed Hiccups arm and hauled him to his feet. Toothless growled in warning as Hiccup stumbled to his feet before being pulled along in a quick hurry. His notepad and pencil dropped from his grip but Fishlegs didn't stop, he continued dragging along the poor Chief as he struggled and tripped behind him.

"Fishlegs!" Hiccup tried to bring some authority into his voice but it always felt wrong to speak to his friends like that, even if he was their Chief after all. Hiccup was about to command an order for him to stop before his metal leg got caught in a stone and sent the Chief flying. Hiccup wouldn't have had a sore fall for sure if it hadn't been for his trusty dragon catching him beforehand.

"You need to see this Hiccup, you need to!"

"See what?!" he exclaimed.

Fishlegs paled and slowed down as they reached the long stretch of beach. There, was gathered a few of his men and among them , Gobber.

"Hiccup!" He cried when he seen the young lad come into view.

Hiccup finally shrugged off Fishlegs' grip, "Gobber what on Odin's beard is going on?"

Gobber looked grim as he stepped aside and revealed a lump of metal lying amongst the sand. Hiccup squinted then frowned, kneeling down he brushed some of the sand from it.

"It washed ashore this morning Chief" one of the Vikings informed him. Hiccup gasped as he finally realised what it was he was holding. He dropped it like it was scorching hot. The long cone shaped metal was not just any old junk... it was in the shape of an arm with leather now fading and ruined by the salt in the sea, binding around it. There was no mistaken what it was.

"Drago" Hiccup whispered.

"Now, now" Gobber guided the Chief to his feet. He gave a look to the other Vikings which clearly told them to bugger off.

Hiccup turned to Gobber, "How has this only been washed up now?" he gestured to the prosthetic arm which sent chills up his spine, even though he was without a limb also.

Gobber shrugged and looked out to sea, "I don't know, I suppose storms have sent it all over the place and now.. now it's back"

Hiccup shivered, "You don't think he's coming back do you? To finish us off for good?"

Gobber placed his hand on the tense shoulder of the Chief, "Don't be ridiculous, no one could survive what he went through. The water would have been too cold, and he wouldn't have gotten far by swimming with only one arm"

Hiccup stood silent for a moment, thinking things over in this his before sighing, "You're right, I'm being stupid. It's just a shock.. to see it again"

Gobber nodded, too right it had been a shock for him too.

"Go on, you better get to the hall for dinner, I'll deal with this" he looked down at the arm.

Hiccup smiled and offered the man, who had become the father figure in his life, a pat on the back. "Thanks, Gob. I'll see you soon"

"And you too" he called to the receding back of the Chief.

Gobber watched Hiccup until he was out of sight then sighed heavily. He hadn't wanted to worry the lad but he too wondered if Drago could be back. Drago was a mad man so would it really be surprising if he had survived? And if he had survived, there wasn't a single doubt in Gobber's mind that he would want revenge with no other, than Hiccup himself.

2. Chapter 2

Hiccup couldn't get the image of Drago out of his head. He shivered violently as he remembered Drago forcing the Alpha to take over Toothless. Toothless' wide eyes had turned to slits as he had stalked Hiccup down like Hiccup was his prey. It had completely freaked Hiccup out to see Toothless acting so deadly.

The Chief stopped abruptly in this stride and took a moment to pull his self together. He shook his head like a wet dog, trying to shake all the terrible memories from that day away. Hiccup often found his mind wandering to the day his dad died. He missed his dad terribly but constantly tried to conceal it so as not to worry Valka or Astrid. They had been the ones who had taken care of Hiccup after the final battle on Berk with Drago. Not long after Hiccup had been titled chief by Gothi, Berk's elder, had the adrenalin of the battle worn off and left Hiccup emotionally and physically exhausted. They had discreetly rushed him home and fed him. Hiccup remembered that day like it was yesterday. He had been shaking and sweating at the same time. Cold and clammy. No one could blame him though, the poor boy had not been given a single moment to rest or grieve since setting his dad's ship to sail. Since that day both the women in his life had been protective over their Hiccup, Valka more so than Astrid. After all it was a mothers job to fret and worry all day

wasn't it? Hiccup knew that his mother would probably be worrying right now as the sun had already ebbed over the horizon and the darkness was starting to descend over Berk.

Rubbing his arms to keep them warm, Hiccup continued through the woods and towards Berk. The woods quietness and serenity often calmed Hiccup, and he found more often than not, he'd take a small walk in them to clear his head. Looking up towards the pitch black sky, the Chief wondered where his pesky dragon had gotten too. Although the two were extremely close they also knew when the other needed space, but judging by the growing coldness and darkness and long walk ahead, Hiccup could really use Toothless now to get home before his mother sent out a search party.

A twig snapped behind the Chief and he spun around, his hand reaching to his other forearm to withdraw his dagger. He squinted his eyes into the trees and could have sworn he saw a dark shadow of a man fleet past but before he could go investigate he was swept of the ground and into the air.

"Toothless!" Hiccup yelled grumpily, the dragon had once again succeeded in surprising his rider.

The dragon looked beneath him at Hiccup and gave him a gummy grin. Hiccup couldn't resist in smiling too. Toothless then threw Hiccup forward before diving underneath him, so his rider expertly slid on to his back. "Come on bud, let's go home" Hiccup patted Toothless fondly, before quickly casting one last glance down at the forest.

* * *

><p>"Hiccup!" Valka jumped up from the stool she sat upon and rushed over to engulf her son in a smothering hug. He was cold and shivering slightly but that didn't matter, all that mattered was that he was home now.<p>

"Hey mum" Hiccup wrapped his arms around her and gave her a small peck on the cheek before pulling away and starting the task of removing his flying gear.

"And hello Toothless" Valka stepped away from Hiccup and knelt beside the dragon, petting and rubbing at all his favourite spots. Toothless purred happily. "What adventure did you's go on this time?" she asked before standing back up and taking Hiccup's armour to hang up.

Hiccup paused for a moment before answering, he wondered if he should tell his mum about Drago's arm that had washed ashore but decided against it. His mum didn't need any more worry in her life, Hiccup provided her with enough already.

"Oh, you know, the usual", Hiccup shrugged nonchalantly. Valka raised an eyebrow. "I started to work on planning the classrooms... and we went for a small ride..."

Hiccup sat down and pulled of his boot.

"Oh?" Valka could tell the young man was hiding something but she didn't press him anymore about it, she knew that he would tell her in time, "There's some soup on the table for you", she gestured towards

the kitchen, "And Astrid came by looking for you about twenty minutes ago"

Hiccup sighed, he knew exactly what Astrid would want. She'd want to know why he hadn't showed up for dinner at the great hall. Technically he wouldn't have made it in time anyway... well if he'd had a bit of urgency about him maybe he would have caught dessert but he wasn't going to let Astrid know that. On Sunday's the Chief always had dinner at the great hall, it was a tradition that had ran for many, many years but Hiccup hated having to sit alone in the huge chair, built for his father's figure, not his, and face his people as they all ate. He felt on show, like everyone was watching him, even though they were more interested in their food than him.

"I should probably go find her now" Hiccup decided, pulling his boot back on and standing up. He knew the later he left it, the more annoyed she'd become.

"What about your soup?" asked Valka, she had removed Toothless' saddle and was now preparing him some fish, "It will go cold"

Hiccup gave her another quick kiss on the cheek, "I won't be long, promise!" he called over his shoulder before rushing out the door.

Valka sat back on her hunches beside Toothless and sighed.

"Does that boy ever stopped?" she asked aloud, shaking her head.

Toothless made a low grumbling sound. _No, he doesn't_.

* * *

><p>Hiccup sped walked through the village. Astrid's small house which she shared with her uncle and aunt was at the other side of Berk, not ideal for the couple at all. He passed some people on the way whom all called out a drunken greeting. Hiccup returned it with a smile, forever thankful that they all seemed to love and accept him so much. As Hiccup neared Astrid's house, he noticed that the huge door of the dragons stables was wide open and swaying in the wind.<p>

"Great" Hiccup muttered, thinking that the gusts from last night had broken the hinges in the door but as he got closer to it, he realised that it wasn't broken at all.

Hesitantly Hiccup stepped into the stables. It was pitch black and eerily quiet. Hiccup knew it was late but dragon's weren't exactly quiet creatures, awake or asleep.

"Hello?" Hiccup called out, as he started to walk along the corridor which would lead him into the indoor feeding area. A creak was heard behind him. He stood still and listened harder. For all he knew it may just be a dragon, and he wouldn't want to startle it by waving his sword about.

All of a sudden an arm grabbed him around his waist, another slapped across his mouth to prevent him calling for help.

"Argh!" came Hiccup's surprised and muffled response. He tried to struggle out of the person's grip but they were too strong and had him securely pinned against them.

Odin help me, Hiccup thought.

3. Chapter 3

"You really need to work on handling surprise attacks"

Astrid's voice instantly relaxed Hiccup. The arm, unwound itself from around his waist and the hand was removed from his mouth, he whirled around to scowl at her.

"That's not funny" Hiccup crossed his arms and jutted out his chin. His eyes brushed over Astrid and as always, he found his heart doing this weird fluttery thing in his chest. She was just too damn beautiful. And the best part? She was his. Hiccup wasn't too sure how he had gotten himself the most beautiful girl in Berk but he tried not to think too hard about it.

"It is!" giggled Astrid, then seeing her boyfriend's face she took a step forward and gave his cheek a pinch, "Come on, I'm just keeping you on your toes! I could have been a real kidnapper there!"

"Yeah, yeah" Hiccup rolled his eyes and rubbed his cheek from where she'd pinched it.

Astrid huffed, "You're really not taking your combat training seriously"

"I am!" But Hiccup knew he wasn't. Combat training sessions with Astrid were fun. Fun, in the way that he got to spend time with her but not fun in the sense that he was actually enjoying or learning anything.

"Hiccup, I know you think you don't need to learn anything because you have Toothless to protect you but tonight was a perfect example! You were alone and if I had been a true threat I could have easily taken you away without a single person on this island knowing about it" She stood with a hand on her hip, and a mothering tone in her voice.

Hiccup sighed heavily, taking a step forward and tucking a strand of her golden hair behind her ear. "Your right, it's just... not my thing. But I'll try. For you." He lifted her chin gently and she smiled.

"Good" she said, relaxing some more now she knew that her boyfriend was taking her seriously. She leant forward and pressed her lips against his. Their kisses were always sweet, so loving and caring. The two of them had been together for seven years and knew each other both so well.

Hiccup pulled away and smiled down at her, "You're beautiful" he whispered, pressing his forehead to hers. Astrid hated the way how those few words made her cheeks go as red as a tomato but loved the sincerity of them on his tongue.

"You're not so bad yourself" she joked and tapped his nose, "Not can we go? It stinks in here"

Hiccup wrinkled his nose and had to agree. "Come on then"

He took her hand in his and they left the dragon stables, not before he had closed the huge doors behind them.

"Are you staying at mine tonight?" Hiccup asked casually. He didn't want any desperation to show in his voice. He didn't want Astrid to know just how much he depended on her and needed her.

"Is that an invitation?" she asked.

Hiccup rolled his eyes, "Astrid, you know you're always welcome. Gee, you might as well move in already!" he laughed then stopped as he realised what he'd just said.

"Move in, huh?"

Now it was Hiccup's turn to blush.

"Well, I just meant... you know.. I don't even know if you'd want to..." Hiccup spluttered and rubbed the back of his neck, all the while whilst Astrid watched him, a fond smile on her lips. She loved the way how even after all these years he still got so awkward and bashful over the silliest things.

"Well it was bound to happen sooner or later anyway" Astrid cut across him bluntly.

"It was?"

Astrid sighed exasperatedly, "Hiccup we've been dating for seven years! We're twenty two! Of course I want to move in with you!" she slapped him on the arm.

"You do?" asked Hiccup shocked, not even registering the hard hit to his arm. To be perfectly honest the poor lad was used to the random assault from his girlfriend by now.

Astrid groaned, "Sometimes you really, really annoy me"

Valka had gone to bed by the time the couple arrived home. Toothless greeted them with a purr and a nudge to a hand each. Hiccup reheated the soup and they all sat before the slowly dying fire whilst eating their late dinner and telling each other about their day in hushed whispers.

"I've nearly finished the designs for the classrooms" he told her after a spoon of soup.

"You have?" Astrid's eyes lit with excitement, Hiccup nodded. "So it's really going to happen?"

Hiccup frowned, "Of course it's going to happen. You could teach combat training too"

Her eyes grew wider, "I could?" she shrieked, then remembering Hiccup's sleeping mother, she slapped a hand across her mouth,

"Sorry" she whispered throwing Hiccup an apologetic glance.

He laughed, "So you'll do it then, you'll train Berk's finest? You'll get this island fit and rearing to fight?"

"I suppose I could do that but what are we preparing to fight for?" Astrid frowned and then set her bowl and spoon down, having ate all her soup.

Hiccup realised he hadn't told Astrid about the shock he'd received earlier on and dithered whether to tell her or not. Slowly he placed his bowl on the ground and thought for a moment on how to phrase this without worrying Astrid.

"Well... there's no real threat... really, I'm just being _precautious" _Hiccup leant back and started to remove his boot and furs. Astrid followed suit whilst surveying him carefully. She unclasped her fur collar.

"Something's spooked you hasn't it?" she started to tug at her boots. Hiccup leant over and pulled them off for her.

"No... well... nothing really"

"Hiccup..." she tried again, reaching over and tweaking his braid.

"_Okay_, but please it's nothing to worry about" Astrid raised her eyebrow and let Hiccup continue, "Earlier today, Fishlegs came and found me, he took me down to the beach and... well Gobber was there and he showed me something that had washed ashore.."

Hiccup fiddled with his woollen socks, avoiding his girlfriends gaze, "And? What was it?"

"A metal arm" he whispered.

"A metal arm?" Astrid asked incredulously.

"Yeah it was... well I'm sure it was anyway... Drago's"

"Oh."

"Yeah.."

Astrid sat back.

"So... you think he's alive?"

"I don't know. But I'm not taking any chances this time round" his voice was final.

Astrid studied Hiccup's grim face, flickering in the light from the fire. It must have been a huge shock to discover the man's arm who ended his dad's life and tried to end his washed ashore on his very own beach, posing threat on his beloved village. Hiccup may be young and inexperienced when it comes to being a chief but his pride, protectiveness and love for his own constantly shone through and guided Berk to safety each time. Now, Berk was possibly under threat

and a threat that no one was sure they were ready to deal with. How could anyone prepare for battle with Drago? He's a madman and you just don't talk to madness.

Positive. Stay positive. Astrid thought to herself as she lay in Hiccup's bed looking up at his wooden ceiling. There is the great possibility that Drago is not alive, and indeed did drown two years ago, like he should have. And who's to say even if he is alive that he will dare come back to Berk and start a war? He had been humiliated and defeated the first few times, the most recent of which was by a young man.

Hiccup's breath lightly blew against Astrid's neck. He was laying on his stomach, an arm lazily thrown across her midriff and their bodies side by side. His hair ticked her cheek, and his breath blew air kisses on her neck, raising goose bumps along her skin. She smiled at his steady breath and messy soft hair.

He was gorgeous. He had always been cute, ever since they'd been younger she had thought that. But how could she ever justify talking to Hiccup the Useless, to her friends back then? Although he was the Chief's son he hadn't exactly been popular, and it was mostly due to the fact that he tried so damn hard. And it's funny because when he stopped the trying, and was just himself everyone got to know him and love him. Astrid still hated herself for not talking to him back then though. Sometimes she'd remember his lonely figure, watching on as she and the other Viking teens played games or practised training. It wasn't his fault that no one had talked to him. It was her and her friends for thinking they were better.

She softly ruffled his hair as he continued to sleep soundly.

None of the past mattered now though, and she wouldn't let herself dwell on it. They'd found each other eventually and now they were together. Every night Astrid always thanked her lucky stars and the God's above for letting her have the honour of being with Hiccup. She thanked them for even letting him be in her life. He was sweet, caring and loving. He had brought a softer side out in Astrid too. She wouldn't like to admit it but cuddling and kissing and showing affection wasn't so bad afterall. And all this peace and no war thing? She was fine with that too.

Hiccup groaned, pulling Astrid out of her thoughts. He moved slightly and tightened his grip on his girl. Astrid brushed his hair aside to see his face, it was scrunched up, almost as if he was in pain.

"Hiccup?" she called gently, nudging his shoulder.

He let out a little huff then turned over onto his back. Astrid waited. He had had many night terrors since Stoick's death beforehand and she knew this could be another one occurring just now. He yelled out and she decided to interfere. Toothless woke up and padded over, whining lowly, he too was used to Hiccup's bad dreams.

"Hiccup, come on, wake up!" Astrid spoke more loudly now but caressed his face, rubbing her thumb along his cheek, "It's just a dream, wake up!"

Hiccup jolted upright with a gasp. He was shivering and shaking, his

face pale and sweaty. Slowly, as to not frighten him, Astrid placed a hand on his shoulder. He jumped anyway despite her gentle manner.

"Are you okay?"

Silence sat heavy in the air before she heard him take a shaky breath.

"Yeah I'm fine" slowly he lowered himself back down to a laying position. Astrid waited before laying back down too and slowly snuggled into his side. He wrapped his arms around her and pressed his lips to the top of her head.

"Thanks, love"

"Anytime"

****This chapter is longer compared to my other two but I just wanted to establish Hiccup and Astrid's relationship to you all! In HTTYD2 they are a lot more affectionate and open about being together and I reckon, two years on and with the death of Hiccup's father, they would have gotten a lot closer! This is just my interpretation and although my story won't solely be focused on their relationship (but on the battle and Hiccup's grievance instead) I didn't want to completely ignore it! Enjoooyyyy and **please** leave reviews they make me **_**so**_** happy!****

4. Chapter 4

Hiccup was annoyed.

Astrid had been at his elbow all day, watching his every move and making sure he was okay every other second. His bad dream last night had left him grumpy and tired. For Astrid it had renewed her worry for how Hiccup was dealing with his dad's death. Two years was nothing in the world of grief. For the first year without his dad, Hiccup had been in shock. At first he had had getting to know his mother and doing his Chief duties to keep him busy and distract him from the harsh reality. It wasn't until the following Christmas that realisation dawned and Hiccup stopped denying that his dad was only on a long voyage. No, now he understood. Stoick wasn't ever coming back and he got that now. It was cruel, Astrid thought. The son and father had only really gotten to know each other for five years before Stoick had been taken away. Beforehand Hiccup and his father hadn't exactly had a close relationship and Stoick could hardly say he knew his son very well. But after Hiccup's determination and stubbornness which he showed when defeating the red death, Stoick realised that his son was exactly like him. Maybe not so much alike in appearance but did that really matter? It was then that the man changed and he and his son developed a friendship that they should have made many years ago.

It was made only to be torn apart five years later as Stoick saved Hiccup. Sacrificing his own life for his son's. And Astrid knew that that was what ate away at Hiccup, the fact that his dad had died saving him. She knew fine well that he blamed himself. He blamed himself for trying to make peace with Drago when his dad had told him it wouldn't work but he had persisted anyway because he was stubborn

just like him. He blamed himself for Drago attacking Berk. He blamed himself for the dragon's being taken over and controlled by the former Alpha. Blame, blame, blame.

Astrid knew too well that he had perfected an act that tricked everyone around him that he was okay. It tricked everyone, that is, but Astrid and Toothless.

And that is why Astrid was determined not to let Hiccup fall into one of his isolating cocoons yet again.

"Astrid why don't you see how Snotlout's doing at Dragon Training with the new recruits?" Hiccup asked, a subtle hint for her to leave him alone for awhile.

"Oh, you know Snotlout" she waved a hand dismissively, "He'll be fine" she continued to follow him about like a loyal dog as he carried on with his duties.

"It's just, most of the time his teaching methods are _questionable_" Hiccup arched an eyebrow at her.

Astrid sighed, "Hiccup that was one time! And that kid _was_ being cheeky"

Hiccup smiles at a passing villager, while another passes him a list of things to do. "Astrid..." he looks down at the list, rolls his eyes and shoves it in his pocket, "You can't set a child's tunic alight just because they're being annoying"

"Well, it certainly worked. That kid hasn't given Snotlout any bother since"

"Right, whatever, well can't you go find the twins and start on this list?" Hiccup retrieves the crumpled letter from his pocket and holds it out to her.

Astrid sighs heavily before taking it and running her eyes down the piece of parchment.

"Hiccup you can't be serious" Astrid looks up at her boyfriend, her voice deadpan.

"What?" he feigns innocence whilst stopping in his stride to pick up an apple core and chuck it in a barrel bin.

"These jobs are ridiculous! '_Please have a word with my wife as she never cooks what I want her to'_?" Astrid reads aloud incredulously.

Hiccup tries to keep a straight face but can't help but give a fond smile and wave to Gothi as she hobbles past them. He turns to his girlfriend.

"Astrid, as the Chief's partner, you too need to ensure everyone here on Berk is completely happy and content. This man obviously isn't happy, he's a hungry, growing Viking who just wants to eat dinners that he likes!"

"Hiccup I'm refusing to go to talk to this poor wife! I'm defying the

Chief's order" she puffs her chest out and crosses her arms, staring her Chief down.

Hiccup surprised, raises his eyebrows.

After a moment of silence, "Fine whatever." throwing up his arms in exasperation, he marches away towards his special spot which lays past the cabbage fields.

"Hiccup!" Astrid calls after him, "Hiccup!"

Irritated and fed up the young man disappears into the descending fog, ignoring his girl's calls.

"I can't believe him" Astrid muttered, about to follow him, before deciding to give him some time alone, after all he could benefit from it.

Hiccup lay down on the damp grass. There was no view today, instead a misty fog which blurred his vision and only angered his headache furthermore. He closed his eyes and marvelled at the silence and peace.

The peace didn't last long though, as it never does on Berk. A slow rumble sounded from afar in the sky. Hiccup peeked an eye open.

"Great, Thor's angry" he muttered, wondering what they had done now to anger the God. Despite the storm that was on its way Hiccup decided to stay on the hill which he found comfort in visiting. He only felt slightly guilty about abandoning his village when he knew they'd be preparing for the storm, and waiting for him to command further orders but today his head was too fuzzy. His dream last night had spooked him. It had been of Drago but this time Drago had taken control over Hiccup, not Toothless and ordered him to not only kill his dad, but his mum and Astrid and Gobber and all of his other friends too. He knew it wasn't physically possible for Drago to control him but it had been scary to see his friends and family cowering away from him in fear. It made him think... was he the cause of his father's death? Would he lead his mother and friends to their deaths too? He was starting to question himself all over again. Should he really be the one protecting and leading Berk when he was the one who lost their Chief beforehand?

Thoughts swirled around in Hiccup's head like an angry tornado. He was so caught up in them he had completely forgotten about the storm and jumped as another thunder clapped from overhead. The storm was moving quickly and Hiccup realised the worst of it would be above Berk soon. Realising he should be down helping his village, the young Chief sprung to his feet, his metal one teetering slightly but he found his balance and started to quickly descend the hill.

"Hiccup!", relief flooded through Gobber as he seen his Chief racing towards the forge. "Where have you been, lad?"

"You know", Hiccup shrugged, "Here, there and everywhere!"

Gobber rolled his eyes, Hiccup was never specific when it came to his wanderings.

"Has everything been storm proofed? Everything tall and metal taken down and moved further away?" Hiccup asked while looking around him at his village worriedly.

"Yes, yes, it's all done, now get back home before the worst of it hits" Gobber, always protective over the lad, pushed him in the direction of his house.

"But-"

"Hiccup, everything's fine. All we need is for you and me to go home and then everyone is safe. We'll wait out the storm then carry on as normal"

Hiccup nodded, "Sorry for not being here to help-"

"Hiccup" Gobber warned as a flash of lightning lit up the sky.

"Right. Home. Got it!" with that, the Chief ran off in the direction of his home but not before shouting over his shoulder, "Be safe!"

"Aye, aye" Gobber rolled his eyes and retreated back to the forge before locking everything up.

****This is just a little filler chapter but oooh it's getting closer to the main part of the story! I'm so excited eek! Please leave reviews**** they really do make me smile!**

5. Chapter 5

The storm lasted all through the night and for most of the evening. Not many people got sleep, especially the dragons. Toothless and Stormfly had ran around the living room in circles whilst Cloudjumper had sat back not amused in the slightest. Hiccup and Astrid had both lain silent in the Chief's bed. Neither one with anything to say to the other. Hiccup's mind was racing as every thunder clap deepened his worry. Astrid stayed silent so as not to bring Hiccup out his deep thoughts. She knew that if he wanted to talk, he would and until then she would try and get some rest.

But rest did not come. Thor was especially angry for whatever unfathomable reason. His thunder claps stayed relentless all night long. Eventually the sun rose, shining through the clearing fog and declaring the storm as over. The people of Berk groggily got out of their beds, sleep deprived and irritated. Most rushed out to assess any damage caused by Thor but there was none. Long ago the village had constructed a storm-proof plan and it had worked every single storm without fault.

Hiccup awoke from his doze with a start to find Astrid shooing Toothless away.

"Let him rest Toothless!" the dragon jumped at her, she would have been knocked down for sure if she hadn't grabbed on to the door knob for support, "You dozy dragon, you'll wake him up!"

Hiccup smiled fondly as his girlfriend struggled to usher the dragon out of his bedroom. It was sweet to see her caring about his lack of sleep. It might have had something to do with the fact it was now his second night in a row without sleep. Hiccup was exhausted but he knew he couldn't just take a day off because he was simply tired.

"Morning m'lady" he croaked out, his voice thick with tiredness. Astrid spun around in surprise, and Toothless seeing an opportunity, bounded right past her to jump up onto his riders bed. "Hey bud" the dragon nuzzled Hiccup's side gently.

"Hiccup you should go back to sleep" Astrid sighed, coming to slowly sit down beside him.

"Why? I'm fine, I have too much to do today to sleep in" Hiccup insisted, shaking his head in denial. He definitely would not let his village down by sleeping all day especially when they could all do with a day of rest themselves.

"Hiccup you look exhausted" her eyes ran over him worriedly, his face was gaunt and two dark smudges of purple rested under each eye. Toothless cocked his head to assess his rider and had to agree with Astrid for once.

"And I am but I'll be fine! Eret and his men will be returning at noon from their voyage and I need to talk with them" He brushed Astrid's hand away as she tried to feel his head for a temperature. Now she's just looking for an excuse for him to stay in bed, "Honestly I'll be absolutely dandy" he pecked a kiss on her cheek then bounced out of bed, whistling as he made his way downstairs to make breakfast. Astrid rolled her eyes.

Hiccup paced the dock as the sun sat high in the sky. Eret and his men should be back by now. They often took a few days out to check out the surrounding area. They would look out for injured dragons or shipwrecks and Hiccup was anxious for them to arrive home so he could tell them about Drago's arm. He wanted them to search long and far to see if they could find the man or get any information as to whether he's alive or not.

"Hiccup!"

Hiccup spun around as Eret and his three other men landed their dragons before him.

"Chief" the men greeted him whilst bowing their heads slightly.

"Eret, it's good to see you" Hiccup's smile was genuine as Eret clambered off Skullcrusher.

"Hiccup, I need to talk with you urgently!" Eret wasted no time and grabbed Hiccup as he rushed to the great hall.

"What's wrong? Did you come across anything?"

"Oh, we certainly came across something alright"

Eret wasn't like his usual self. Usually after his long trips Eret

and Hiccup would dine together and tell each other everything that had happened in the period of time they'd been apart. They were good friends and Hiccup trusted Eret with his life. It was especially unusual for Eret to skip all the pleasantries and get straight down to business.

The two men finally reached the empty hall, Eret swiftly shut the huge doors in the faces of his men and then sat down promptly at a table, impatiently waiting for Hiccup to hobble over.

"Hiccup we may have a problem" Eret started.

Hiccup sighed heavily, knowing whatever came out Eret's mouth next wouldn't please him or lessen his growing worry.

"We spotted some ships docked at an island about a day's flight away" Eret pulled out a map from his back pocket and flattened it out over the wooden table before easily locating the island and pointing it out to Hiccup. "We decided to land and see if they were lost or needed any help" of course we hid the dragons before making ourselves known but... but there was no need for us to disguise that we were Berkians"

Hiccup held his breath in anticipation. He felt he almost _knew _ what Eret was going to say next.

"It was Drago's men"

He paused.

"They spotted me as soon as I stepped out. Immediately they withdrew their weapons, not even allowing us to explain ourselves" Eret sat back, his eyes taking on a faraway look as he remembered the day before, "They tried to kill us and if our dragons hadn't intercepted... well let's just say I wouldn't be sitting here with you just now"

Hiccup puffed his cheeks out as he ran over what Eret had just told him, "Do you think they're going to attack?"

Eret nodded solemnly, "Especially after their little run in with us... if they hadn't wanted a war before they'll definitely want one now. They'll be wanting revenge; with you no doubt"

Hiccup rested his elbows on the table and sunk his head into his hands. Eret hated the way his friend looked way older than he was. Being Chief was really starting to take a toll on him. It wasn't that Eret didn't think he was a good chief, in fact he thought he was the best leader he had ever seen, he just knew it was a lot of strain and stress for a young man to take on so suddenly.

"What am I going to do, Eret?" Hiccup asked, sounding truly exhausted. He raised his head from his hands and looked at the man beside him with tired eyes.

Eret, misinterpreting the Chief's worry, puffed his chest out and looked determined, "Don't you worry Hiccup, you'll have Berk's finest warriors protecting you. You won't be going anywhere"

Hiccup shook his head, "It's not me I'm worried about. It's Berk, how

on earth can I protect them from such murderous and deranged men? Drago's followers are merciless and crazy. They won't be happy until I, and most of Berk, are dead and I _can't_ let anyone die" Eret's heart grew heavy as Hiccup's voice cracked, "I just can't"

The silence settled around the two and it finally sunk in that Berk was about to go into war with a tribe that were only looking for one thing; death. There would be no reasoning with them, Hiccup had made that mistake with Drago already, their only option would be to fight back. And with fighting there was always the very high possibility of injuries or deaths. Hiccup didn't want that. He wanted to send his precious village away, to protect them and to fight and sacrifice himself for them. Of course, he couldn't do that. Not only would it take too long to send his people away but Drago's followers would soon find out where they were and kill them.

"No one will die, Hiccup. You are a great leader and will lead your tribe to safety" Eret informed his Chief determinedly and ferociously.

"Eret, I am not the gods, I can't prevent deaths but trust me you, I will do everything in my power to end this war once and for all" Hiccup's eyes glinted and Eret smiled triumphantly.

"What's your plan, Chief?"

Hiccup stood up, "Ready the ships"

End
file.